

News from the Wyoming Department of Health

Wednesday, January 20, 2010

Plans Set for Mental Health Conference, Recovery Awards Banquet

Organized by the Wyoming Department of Health and UPLIFT, the Governor's Roundtable on Children's Mental Health is set for February 8-9 in Cheyenne at the Little America Hotel and Resort. UPLIFT is a Wyoming mental health advocacy organization.

The conference theme this year is "Hope and Resiliency." Rodger McDaniel, Wyoming Department of Health deputy director for mental health and substance abuse services, said the theme is intended to celebrate families, youth, consumers and others involved in Wyoming's commitment to mental health services.

McDaniel said topics planned for the conference should be relevant for all individuals who work with youth and families.

"With this conference, we hope to provide a forum for dialogue, debate and learning about innovations in research and policy for mental health issues in Wyoming, particularly those affecting children," he said.

"This is an opportunity to learn more about the work being done around Wyoming and elsewhere," McDaniel continued. "The chance to talk with consumers and families who may have been engaged in the mental health system is especially valuable."

A highlight of the gathering will be the 3rd Annual Starfish Awards banquet on February 8 from 6 to 8 p.m. The Wyoming Department of Health will present awards to Wyoming residents who have shown unique and extraordinary leadership in helping those who suffer because of mental illness and/or substance abuse.

Casper Police Chief Tom Pagel will be the featured speaker during the banquet. Pagel previously served as Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation director and was recently nominated by President Barack Obama to be Wyoming's U.S. Marshal. Pagel was a top proponent of Wyoming's first methamphetamine initiative and has a long history as an advocate for law enforcement and drug treatment and prevention.

For more information about attending the conference and/or the Starfish Awards Banquet, please call Shawna Kautzman at 1-888-875-4383 or visit <http://www.health.wyo.gov/mhsa/initiatives/starfish2010.html> online.

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